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Request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session

Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Africa

Letter dated 8 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Togo to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as the representative of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, I have the honour to request, in accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion on the agenda of the fifty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly of an additional item of great importance, for the purpose of proclaiming the decade 2001-2010 the "Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Africa".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution are attached to this letter (see annexes I and II).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Roland Y. **Kpotsra**

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Annex I

[Original: English]

Explanatory memorandum

It is to be recalled that the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at its thirty-third ordinary session, held from 2 to 4 June 1997, issued the Harare Declaration on Malaria Prevention and Control in the Context of African Economic Recovery and Development. In addition to major declarations on health adopted by OAU, an African initiative for malaria control in the twenty-first century was undertaken and became Roll Back Malaria in Africa late in 1998.

This move was given high consideration by the heads of State of Africa owing to the fact that malaria is one of the major causes of death in Africa. In effect, World Health Organization fact sheet No. 94 of October 1998 states that there are 300 to 500 million cases of the disease worldwide, 90 per cent of which are in Africa. In Africa, 5 per cent of children die before the age of 5 years from malaria and other illnesses associated with malaria.

It is therefore in full recognition of the gravity of this disease and the barrier it constitutes to development and poverty alleviation that the African Summit on Roll Back Malaria, held at Abuja on 24 and 25 April 2000, emphasized and proposed an "African Malaria Control Day" and called upon the United Nations to declare the coming decade, 2001-2010, a decade for Roll Back Malaria. April 25 of each year was proposed as African Malaria Control Day. That proposal was endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government by decision AHG/Dec 155 (XXXVI), adopted at Lomé during the thirty-sixth ordinary session of the Assembly.

As a whole the major focus is on controlling malaria in parts of the world, where it is endemic of which Africa forms the largest area. Roll Back Malaria, therefore, aims at mobilizing all society, at continental, national, and grassroots levels, in order to fight against this disease.

Annex II

[Original: French]

Draft resolution

Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 49/135 of 19 December 1994 and 50/128 of 20 December 1995 concerning the struggle against malaria in the developing countries, particularly in Africa,

Bearing in mind the relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council relating to the struggle against malaria and diarrhoeal diseases, in particular its resolution 1998/36 of 30 July 1998,

Acknowledging the importance for countries where malaria is endemic of adopting a modern strategy to combat this most deadly of all tropical diseases, which annually causes more than a million deaths worldwide, approximately a million of them in Africa,

Welcoming the declarations and decisions on health issues adopted by the Organization of African Unity, in particular the Declaration and Plan of Action on the "Roll Back Malaria" initiative adopted at the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held in Abuja on 24 and 25 April 2000, as well as decision AHG/Dec.155 (XXXVI) concerning the implementation of that Declaration and Plan of Action, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, at its thirty-sixth ordinary session, held in Lomé from 10 to 12 July 2000,[1]

Recognizing that malaria-related deaths throughout the world could be eliminated if appropriate health services were made available in countries where the disease is endemic,

Emphasizing that the international community has an essential role to play in strengthening the support and assistance provided to developing countries, particularly African countries, in their efforts to contain the spread of malaria and mitigate its negative effects,

Emphasizing also the importance of implementing the Millennium Declaration[2] and welcoming, in this connection, the commitments of Member States to respond to the specific needs of Africa,

1. *Proclaims* the period 2001-2010 the Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Africa;

2. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the continuing efforts of African countries to combat malaria through the formulation of plans and strategies at the national,

[1] See A/55/286, annex II.

[2] Resolution 55/2.

regional and continental levels, despite their meagre financial, technical and human resources;

3. *Stresses* that the proclamation of an international decade to combat malaria in Africa would stimulate the efforts of the international community and the African countries to roll back malaria in Africa, where the incidence of the disease and of malaria-related deaths are highest;

4. *Appeals* to the international community, United Nations bodies, international and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations to allocate substantial new resources for African countries, with a view to enabling them to implement appropriately the Plan of Action adopted in Abuja for the "Roll Back Malaria" initiative;

5. *Commends* the World Health Organization for its ongoing measures to combat malaria, particularly in Africa, and urges it to provide the necessary assistance to African States in order to meet their objectives;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General, acting in close collaboration with the Director-General of the World Health Organization, African States, the Organization of African Unity and African regional organizations, to conduct in 2005 an evaluation of the measures taken to implement this decade and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution.